

NOPAWN

NOPA West Neighbors

September 23, 2020

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Delivered Via Email

Honorable Supervisors,

The neighbors of the proposed development at 1846 Grove Street and NOPAWN would like to highlight the primary reasons we are opposing it. We are a diverse group and expressed diverse opinions in our discussions. We were unanimous, however, on three primary factors for opposing this development:

- Safety
- Lack of affordable housing
- Potential precedent setting

Safety

Safety is the primary concern of all the neighbors. We have been unable to obtain assurances that this development is safe. The Planning Department, Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator, Department of Building Inspection and Fire Marshall have made their approvals without addressing the overall safety of the development and have not explicitly stated that it is safe. The neighbors cannot understand and are not reassured as to how a narrow 3 ½ feet by 50 feet alleyway, where two people cannot pass each other at a normal stride, can safely accommodate exiting residents and guests, including disabled persons, while first responders are entering carrying equipment in the event of a fire or an earthquake. The idea that residents and guests will shelter in place, as argued by the Project Sponsor, is contrary to the primal human impulse of fleeing danger. With this development, the only possible path for flight is through the narrow alleyway.

It is reasonable for San Franciscans to assume that if a project is approved for construction, it would have been deemed safe by experts and the aforementioned government departments. The neighbors are disappointed that at least one expert has deemed the development to be unsafe, and no government representative has been forthcoming assuring us and all San Franciscans that it is safe.

Letter to Board of Supervisors
September 23, 2020
Page two

Lack of Affordable Housing

The neighbors and NOPAWN are sensitive to the lack of affordable housing in San Francisco and the responsibility of the City's residents and government to address this need. The Project site is closely located to City College of San Francisco (John Adams Campus), University of San Francisco, numerous elementary schools, Saint Mary's Medical Center, Fire Department Stations 5 and 21, Park Police Station and the Northern District Police Station, all of which could benefit from nearby affordable housing for its employees who would be welcomed by their new neighbors. Yet there is no affordable housing offered by this development.

There is a published study highlighting the glut of *unaffordable* housing in San Francisco – there are more vacant units than homeless (Source: SFGate article by Mike Moffitt, updated 12:44 p.m. September 25, 2017). This development will add to the glut and do nothing to address the shortage of affordable housing.

Potential Precedent Setting

As residents of San Francisco, NOPAWN is welcoming of new residents with whom we would like to share the distinct benefits of living here. In order to do that, we need to ensure that the benefits are preserved for all residents. This development has the potential to significantly degrade the quality of life in San Francisco.

The number of variances this development requires is excessive. Variances are designed to be granted to projects that are necessary and desirable. This project is neither. Moreover, it may set the precedent that any residential development in San Francisco should be built, whether or not it has been adequately vetted to be necessary, desirable, safe, environmentally sound, and addresses the shortage of affordable housing. We can envision projects that would set a positive precedent for development in this beautiful city of ours. On the other hand, this development, if approved, would set a negative precedent.

In conclusion, we would like you to understand the main reasons we are opposed to this development and we believe that if you vote in favor of our appeals, you would be doing great service to San Franciscans.

Sincerely,

Brian Kingan & Henry Tang
Co-Presidents